Shock, *Richm. and Louisv. Med. Jour.*, Nov. and Dec.—Buzzard, Clinical Lectures on Some Points in the Diagnosis of Spinal Sclerosis, *London Lancet* (Am. Repr.), Oct. and Nov., 1878.—Myers, The Influence of the Nervous System on the Health of the Mouth, *Lancet and Clinic*, Dec. 21.—Beard, The Scientific Lessons of the Mollie Fancher Case, *N. Y. Med. Rec.*, Nov. 7.

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c.—THERAPEUTICS OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM AND MIND.

Gleditschin.—B. F. Lautenbach, *Philadelphia Med. Times*, Nov. 23, gives an account of the results of a series of investigations on the fruit of two species of Gleditschia growing in the parks of Geneva, Switzerland, where he is now engaged as assistant to Prof. Schiff.

In these investigations it was found that a watery, alcoholic, or ethereal extract of the ripe fruit and seeds of these trees exerted almost no toxic influence on frogs and toads. When, however, an alcoholic extract of the unripe seeds and the portions of the fruit immediately surrounding these was used, very active poisonous effects were observed. In from five to twenty minutes the frogs were in a profound state of stupor. No reflex movements could be excited by any of the known means, though at that time the motor nerves still remained irritable. This loss of reflex activity was not due to loss of function of the sensory nerves through the direct action of the poison on these structures, as, after ligature of all the blood-vessels of a limb, irritation of that limb failed to produce reflex movements when the animal was poisoned with the extract. The heart continued to beat for hours after these symptoms appeared. If a not too large dose was given, the animals recovered after having been in this state for twenty-four hours.

The question now was to determine the nature of, and isolate the principle, on which the activity of this extract of gleditschia depends. Were it a glucoside, it would almost certainly be extracted by water. Watery extracts, hot or cold, are, however, inert if no alcohol was used in their preparation. Again a solution of the extract from which the coloring matters, the tannic acid, and the inorganic salts have been removed, does not, as do all glucosides, yield glucose when boiled with dilute acid.

Further investigation showed the active substance to be an alkaloid. Gleditschin, as he proposes to call this new alkaloid, forms salts with sulphuric, nitric, hydrochloric, acetic, and tannic acids. All of their salts crystallize in modifications of the rhomb.

The facts determined thus far respecting the physiological action of this substance are hereby briefly given ; in a later publication this subject will be treated more fully.

Locally applied to the blood of mammals, like saponin, it causes the blood-corpuscles to disappear. These corpuscles, however, later reappear.

The hearts of frogs continue to beat long after all other signs of like have disappeared. The vagi of frogs poisoned with gleditschin still retain their inhibitory action on the heart. The first symptom produced in frogs is a state analogous to sleep. Following this, rapid abolition of reflex activity takes place, and respiration ceases. The galvanic irritability of the nerves is much diminished.

ERGOT IN SUNSTROKE.—Dr. R. F. Dedrickson reports, *Dublin Jour. of Med. Sci.*, Oct., 1878, two cases of heat apoplexy treated by him last July in Calcutta, with ice at the nucha, fluid extract of ergot internally. In one case, where the cardiac action was strong, he added three minims of tincture of aconite to the fifteen minims of ergot given every hour. A good recovery was obtained in both cases. Several less severe cases were similarly treated with success.

Dr. Dedrickson suggests that in cases where the power of swallowing is gone, the hypodermic injection of ergotine should be tried.

PILOCARPIN IN ECLAMPSIA AND AS AN OXYTOCIC.—*Centralblatt fuer Gynäkologie*, Nov. 15. Dr. E. Bidder, St. Petersburg, records two cases of eclampsia in which pilocarpin was repeatedly used, giving little relief or any to the convulsions, and producing no uterine contraction. Dr. E. Wellponet, St. Petersburg, also records a case in which the most careful and repeated employment of pilocarpin in large doses, failed to induce labor, though it produced the physiological effects of jaborandi. (*Edinburgh Medical Journal*, Sept., 1878.)

THE THERAPEUTICAL ACTION OF GELSEMIUM.—Professor Massini, of Basle, has published a small pamphlet giving an account of eighty cases of neuralgia of the trigeminus, treated by full doses of the tincture of gelsemium. He prefaces his remarks with a brief description of the physiological action of the drug. Redness of the conjunctiva, pain in the eyelids, contraction of the pupil, double vision and giddiness, are the symptoms which generally follow the administration of moderate doses. When the dose is increased, slight ptosis, dilatation of the pupil, gaping, languor, and pain in the limbs are the usual results. The respiration is not affected. In frogs, on the other hand, a large dose produces paralysis of the respiratory muscles, the heart's action remaining unchanged. In cases of neuralgia of the trigeminus, Dr. Massini gives twenty minims of the tincture every half hour up to three doses, and he finds that the first dose usually affords relief, and that the pain rapidly subsides after a second or third dose has been taken. He has never found it necessary to exceed sixty minims, and only in one case did this quantity produce unpleasant head symptoms. The cases in which the remedy produces most benefit are those of simple rheumatic neuralgia of the alveolar branches of the trigeminus; in those it rarely fails. It also sometimes relieves the pain remaining after the stopping of a carious tooth. Where there is any inflammatory affection of the bone or periosteum